Society's Aims Defended by Rep. Hiestand

By Don Irwin WASHINGTON, Mar. 41; California Republican Congressmen vigorusly deterd-ed today their membership in the John Birch Society and urged a Congression incitiv to refute "smears" about the arch-conservative group.

The society's open Congressional advocates were bens. Edgar W. Hiestand and John H. Rousselot, both representatives of sections of sprawling Los Angeles County. Both said they know of other Congressional members of the Controversy-shrouded group, but declined to name them.

Both friends and foes of the society urged investigation of its militant opposition to individuals and proposals which the society links with communism. But there was no such inquiry on the immediate herizon

Rep. Francis E. Walter. D. Pa., chairman of the House Un-American Activities Committee, questioned his group's with "the founder.") jurisdiction on the ground the

ing of the Senate Internal Security subcommittee, of which he is a member. The subcommittee's influential-and conchairman, Sen. servative -James O. Eastland, D., Miss., declined comment on the proposal,

Complaints Sent In

At the Justice Department, there was said to be "concern". about the number of letters. averaging upward of fifty daily, complaining about the society's political activities and attacks by some John Birchers against individuals who disagree with the society's approach.

The department's Internal Security Division was said to be reviewing the situation, but there were no signs of a formal? avestigation reportedly because there are no complaints of statutory violations that would rive the department jurisdiction. Changed with profirstion both of insernal securif and civil horois, the de-

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The uproar about the society, on the Senate floor, evoked new John Birch Society is accusations that former Prest named. He was killed by dent Eisenhower is a "conscious" Chinese Reds in 1945. iagent of the Communist conspiracy from the society's chief of the Central Intelligence founder-leader, Robert H. W. Agency, should be removed as welch ir. Mr. Welch, a retired a Communist tool, or with other Belment, Mass., candy manu. John Birthers who propose im-facturer, talked with The As-peachment of Chief Justice Earl sociated Press this evening after Warren on the same ground. It day of "unavailability" to re-porters.

Itiestand said, show that the so-

gress, said he had been one of success" in these activities has communism, documented with the early members of the so-, begun to hurt," he said that it reports by the F. B. I., the ciety's "home chapter," founded is being "smeared" by "pro- Justice Department, the Unclety's "home chapter," founded is being "smeared" by "pro- Justice Department, the Unclety's "home chapter," founded in the committee of the comm two years ago by Mr. Weich, Communists." whom Rep. Hiestand called "the; founder."

At once affable and vehement, Rep. Hiestand fielded barbed questions without a fumble as he expressed what he called his "personal views." (He did con-code; however, that he had

Rep. Hiestand challenged the complaints against the society (vehiclity of quotations from deal with alleged libels against writings by Mr. Welch which describe former President Elsen. individuals, including former hower as "a dedicated, conscious President Eisenhower, and not agent of the Communist conwith moves against the govern—spiracy." The quote is taken ment.
Sen. Thomas J. Dodd, D. "The Founder" wrote seven Conn., promised to ask for an years ago, Rep. Hiertand said, investigation at the next meet. and doesn't involve the society's "principles."

> Furthermore, he said, he personally didn't agree with the statement. To further questions, he said he can't agree with Mr. Welch that Allen W., Dulles,



whom the controversial

Rep. Hiestand called a heavily ciety is a group of "rugged indiand believed there were more. It is because the society is a group of "rugged indiand believed there were more. He refused names.

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The reshman Congressman, micribers as "rugged individualists" not subject to the refused names.

The freshman Congressman, who reside the refused names and determined in their fight against which he defined as voluntary mustion director of the rederal action to combat all manifests. The would "welcome" an investigation of the society to "clear form the nation of them. He the air." If his experience is said the society is dedicated to my suide, he said, an inquiry fixed as a chain-store branch; rights and a better world."

The severity two year old. "the society is dedicated to my suide, he said, an inquiry manager, before entering Congressman, who resigns and a better world."

The society is dedicated to meetings are devoted to serious discussion of the techniques of manager, before entering Congress" in these activities has communism, documented with suit and hear one of Liestand said, show that the so-jare members of the society

Asked how the society's activities had begun to "hurt." Rep. Hiestand replied that he wasn't "well enough informed to say," but that "the record shows when an anti-Communist group begins to hurt, it begins to be smeared." Communists, he spoken by telephone yesterday added, are in "the far back-with "the founder.")

The group's principles are spelled out, he said, in a "blue book" written by Mr. Welch, which he described as "available." When reporters said they hadn't seen one, the Congressman said he was sorry his was at

Not a Secret Society

Denying that he society is secret, Rep. Hiestand said its rolls aren't public because members might be subject to persecution" which they couldn't take because most of them are "little people,"

He told a questioner he had no knowledge" of charges that California units of the society had asked students to report on activities of teachers. He conceded some questionnaires had been sent out that asked "personal questions," but said they "shouldn't be counte-nanced."

Reminded that J. Edgar Hoover, director of the P. B. I, has warned against fighting communism with "vigifante groups," Rep. Hiestand said he thought that was "sound." and denied that the John Birch, Society is covered by that definition.

'Might be Others' Asked to name other mem-

Reached . by telephone in California, Rep. Rousselot said he had joined a Los Angeles unit of the acclety last fall and is "proud to be a member" of what he defined as "basically study group."

Rep. Rousselot said he knew of two other Congressmen who

American Activities Committee and the Senate Internal Security subcommittee.

Rep. Rousselot defended the society's controversial letter-

writing campaigns directed at members of Congress. He said such letters had been directed espiret Federal aid to education and still-pending Demo-eratio-backed proposals to set those in the foreground are "fine gup uniform Federal standards, people." for state unemployment insurance programs.

> N. A. M. Censured Society The National Association of Manufacturers disclosed yesterday in New York it had in effect censured the John Birch Society in a board resolution adopted last September.

Charles R. Bligh jr., executive vice-president of the N. A. M., said the three former N. A. M. presidents listed as members of the council of the controversial society participated in drawing up the resolution which was passed unanimously.

The resolution did not mention the society or its founder and leader, Robert Welch, by name. But Mr. Sligh said it was passed after disclosure that Mr. Welch had called Gen. Elsen-hower a Congression of the Congression of



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